



2071.0 - Census of Population and Housing: Reflecting Australia - Stories from the Census, 2016

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SEX AND GENDER DIVERSITY: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDING POPULATION

INTRODUCTION

In 2016, the Census of Population and Housing was an important step towards collecting Australian statistics on sex and gender diversity.

This article discusses the population characteristics of the 1,260 people who gave an intentional and valid sex and/or gender diverse response. Although this is not considered to be an accurate or representative count, due to limitations associated with collecting sensitive information, limitations of the special procedures and willingness or opportunity to report as sex and/or gender diverse, it is an important step towards collecting and providing statistics on this group.

This is the second article in a series on sex and gender diverse respondents in the 2016 Census. The first article Sex and gender diversity in the 2016 Census contains information on the collection and processing of information about the sex and/or gender diverse group.

BACKGROUND

The 2016 Census of Population and Housing aimed to make it possible for all Australians to report their sex in a way not limited to either 'male' or 'female'. This followed on from the Australian Attorney General's Department updating the Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender, and requiring Australian government departments and agencies to progressively align their existing and future business practices with the Guidelines.

For the 2016 Census, the ABS recognised that individuals may identify as a sex or gender other than the sex they were assigned at birth, or may not identify as exclusively male or female. A special online form was made available and could be requested to allow respondents to record a sex other than male or female. There were also instructions available for how to report other than male or female on the paper form. Further information on these procedures and their limitations can be found in the article Sex and gender diversity in the 2016 Census.

In this article, sex refers to a person's biological characteristics and gender refers to the way a person identifies their masculine or feminine characteristics.

SCOPE AND COVERAGE

The characteristics described in this article relate to the people who chose to respond as sex and/or gender diverse and were considered to have had a valid response to the 2016 Census Sex question. It is unlikely that they are representative of all people in Australia who identify as sex and/or gender diverse. It should also be noted that sex and/or gender diverse people do not make up a homogenous group. There were a variety of responses to the Sex question given on the Census form, which were grouped into the categories shown below and give an indication of the diversity of sex and/or gender diverse responses to this question.

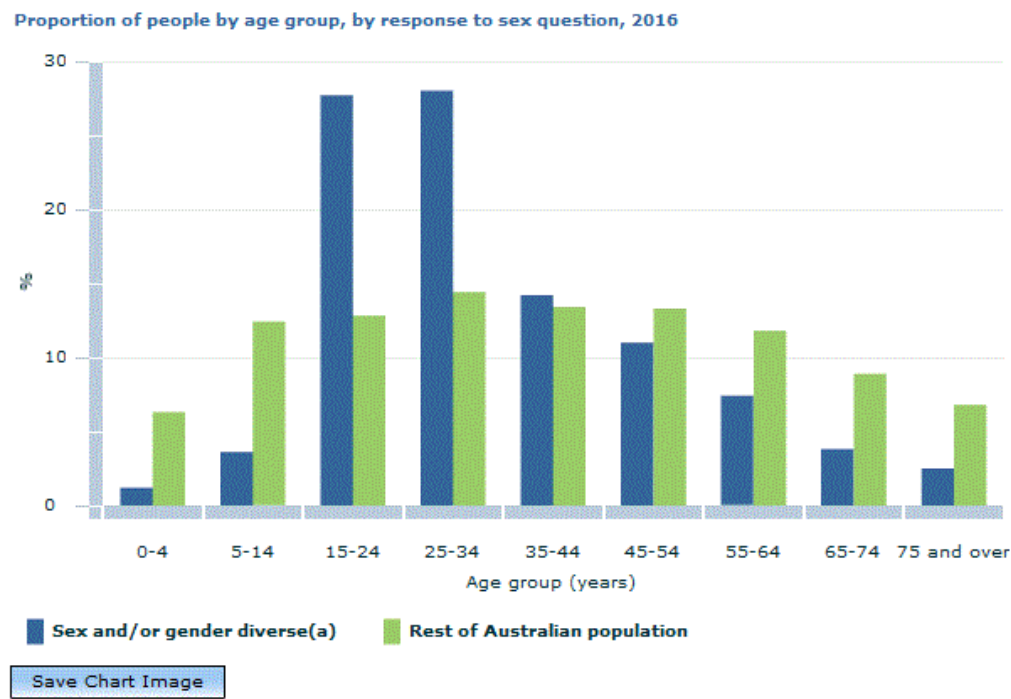
DESCRIPTORS FOR PERSONS REPORTING DIVERSE SEX/GENDER IDENTITY(a)(b), 2016

	Persons(c)	%
Intersex/Indeterminate	40	3.2
Trans male	70	5.5
Trans female	100	7.5
Transgender not elsewhere classified	170	13.2
Non-binary	220	17.3
Another gender	230	18.1
Other not further defined(d)	440	34.9
Persons	1 260	100.0

(a) Comprises people with a valid and intentional sex/gender other than male or female.
(b) This descriptor set is based on terms provided by respondents. More information on how the descriptor set was developed can be found in Sex and gender diversity in the 2016 Census. Category definitions are included in the Explanatory Information section at the end of the article.
(c) Numbers rounded correct to nearest 10.
(d) People who did not identify as male or female, without any further qualifying information about their gender or sex identity.
Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

AGE

In the 2016 Census, the median age of people who identified as sex and/or gender diverse was 30 years, younger than the median age of the rest of the Australian population (38 years). Over half of the sex and/or gender diverse group (56%) was aged 15 to 34 years, compared with 27% of the rest of the Australian population. The younger age profile of the sex and/or gender diverse group may reflect that younger people are more willing to identify as sex and/or gender diverse and more likely to seek out information on how to identify in the Census.

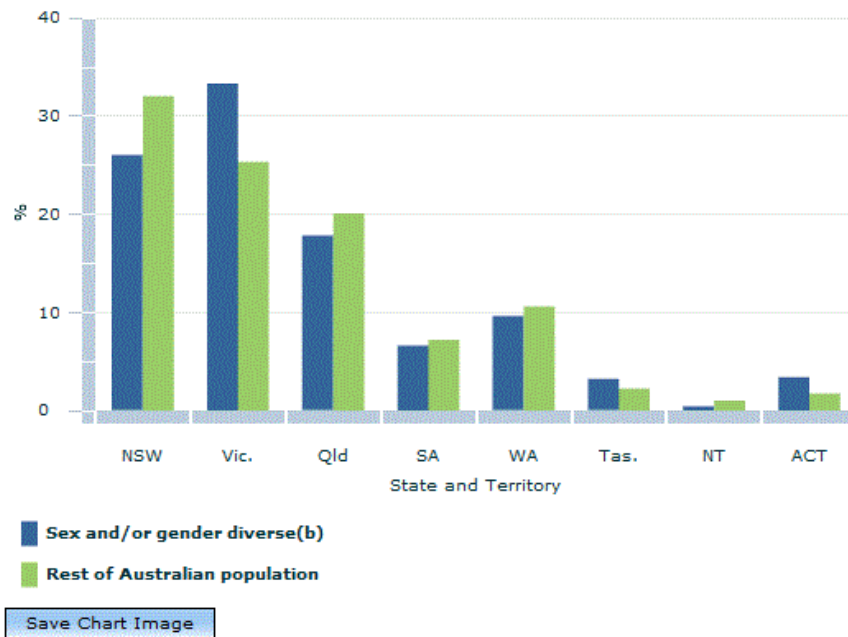


Footnote(s): (a) People who gave a valid and intentional response of sex or gender other than male or female.
Source(s): ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

PLACE OF RESIDENCE

A third of people who identified as sex and/or gender diverse lived in Victoria (33%), followed by those who lived in New South Wales (26%) and Queensland (18%). Less than 1% lived in the Northern Territory.

State & Territory(a), 2016



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Footnote(s): (a) Other territories are included in total. (b) People who gave a valid and intentional response of sex or gender other than male or female.

Source(s): ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

The Australian Capital Territory had the highest rate of people identifying as sex and/or gender diverse (10.8 per 100,000 people), double the Australian rate of 5.4 per 100,000 people. Tasmania and Victoria also had higher rates than Australia overall (7.8 and 7.1 respectively).

SUMMARY STATISTICS BY STATE AND TERRITORY FOR PERSONS REPORTING SEX/GENDER DIVERSITY(a), 2016

State	Persons(b)	Rate per 100 000 people
NSW	330	4.4
Vic.	420	7.1
Qld	230	4.8
SA	80	5.0
WA	120	4.9
Tas.	40	7.8
NT	-	2.2
ACT	40	10.8
Total(c)	1 260	5.4

- nil or rounded to zero

(a) People who gave a valid and intentional response of sex or gender other than male or female.

(b) Numbers rounded correct to nearest 10.

(c) Other territories included in total.

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

The sex and/or gender diverse group reflects the majority of Australians in that a greater proportion of people lived within rather than outside capital cities, although this was more likely for the sex and/or gender diverse group than the rest of the Australian population (75% compared to 67%).

For all states except Tasmania, people who identified as sex and/or gender diverse were more likely to live in the capital city than outside the capital city. People who didn't identify as sex and/or gender diverse were also more likely to live in capital cities, with the exceptions of Tasmania and Queensland.

Proportion of sex & gender diverse people(a) in capital cities(b)(c), 2016



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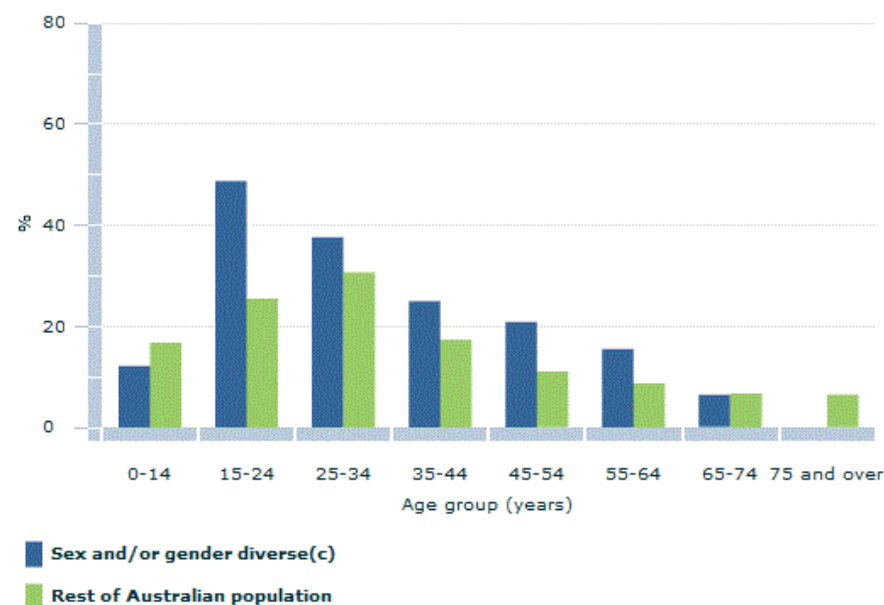
Footnote(s): (a) People who gave a valid and intentional response of sex or gender other than male or female. (b) Migratory, offshore and shipping SA1s were included in the total when calculating proportions for each state. (c) The Northern Territory is excluded due to there being less than 10 people who identified as being sex and/or gender diverse. (d) Greater Capital City Statistical Areas (GCCSA) are used to identify whether people live in a capital city or balance of state. The ACT only has one GCCSA for the entire region.

Source(s): ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

MOBILITY

People who identified as sex and/or gender diverse were more likely than the rest of the Australian population to have changed their place of usual residence in the year before Census night (32% compared with 17%). This may be partly due to the younger age profile of this group and the greater mobility of younger people. People aged 15 to 24 years who identified as sex and/or gender diverse were most likely to have changed addresses (49%).

Changed address in the year before the Census(a)(b), 2016



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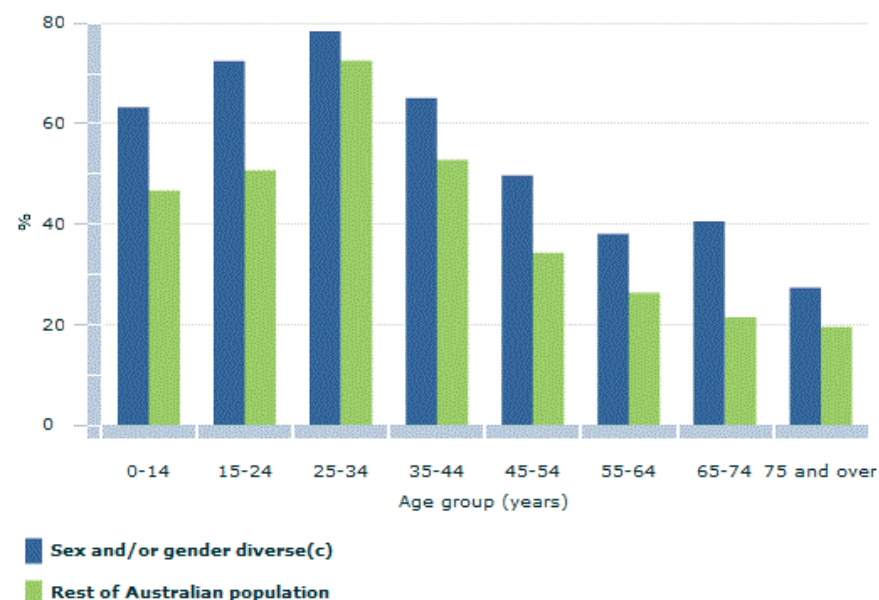
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Footnote(s): (a) People who lived at a different address elsewhere in Australia or overseas. (b) The 'not stated' category was excluded when calculating proportions. (c) People who gave a valid and intentional response of sex or gender other than male or female.

Source(s): ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Two-thirds of people (66%) in the sex and/or gender diverse group had changed their place of usual residence in the 5 years before Census night, compared with 43% of people in the rest of Australia.

Changed address in the five years before the Census(a)(b), 2016



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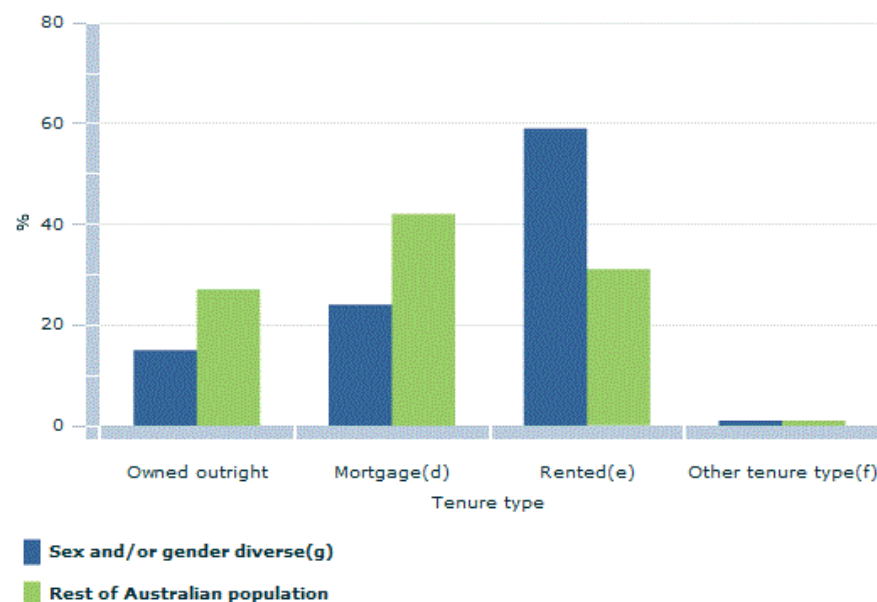
Footnote(s): (a) People who lived at a different address elsewhere in Australia or overseas. (b) The 'not stated' category was excluded when calculating proportions. (c) People who gave a valid and intentional response of sex or gender other than male or female.

Source(s): ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

HOUSING TENURE

People who identified as sex and/or gender diverse were most likely to live in a rented dwelling (59%), almost twice the proportion of the rest of the Australian population (31%). This was the most common living arrangement across all age groups for sex and/or gender diverse people, with the exception of those aged 65 years and over who were most likely to own their dwelling outright. Again, this may be partially due to the younger age of this population: around 40% of people under 35 in Australia were renting.

Proportion of people by housing tenure type(a)(b)(c)



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Footnote(s): (a) Excludes people who weren't at home on Census night, and Visitor and Non-classifiable households. (b) Total includes people who were in a non-private dwelling; migratory, off-shore or shipping SA1. (c) The 'not stated' category was excluded when calculating proportions. (d) Includes dwellings being purchased under a shared equity scheme. (e) Includes dwellings being occupied rent-free. (f) Includes dwellings being occupied under a life tenure scheme. (g) People who gave a valid and intentional response of sex or gender other than male or female.

Source(s): ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

Almost all people (98%) who identified as sex and/or gender diverse lived in a private household, the same proportion as the rest of the Australian population. A fifth of this group lived alone (21%), and a further fifth lived in a group household (22%). This is in contrast to the rest of the Australian population, where 10% of this group lived alone and 3.9% lived in a group household.

Just over half of people who identified as sex and/or gender diverse (54%) lived in a family household, compared with 85% of people in the rest of Australia. Of the sex and/or gender diverse group who lived in a family household, half (49%) were a spouse or partner, and a further quarter (26%) were children and young people aged under 25 years. These proportions were slightly lower than for the remainder of the Australian population who lived in family households, where 54% were a spouse or partner and 33% were children and young people aged under 25 years.

RELATIONSHIP TYPE OF SEX AND/OR GENDER DIVERSE PEOPLE(a) IN FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS(b)

Relationship type	Number(c)	Proportion
Spouse or partner		
Family with no children	200	30.9
Family with children	120	18.4
Lone parent	40	6.6
Children under 25 years(d)	160	25.5

Children over 25 years(e)	40	6.3
Other related individual	30	5.2
Unrelated individual living in Family Household	50	7.2
Total	640	100

(a) People who gave a valid and intentional response of sex or gender other than male or female.

(b) Excludes people in Visitor only and Non-classifiable households, people who had a non-classifiable relationship type, and people who weren't at home on Census night.

(c) Numbers rounded correct to nearest 10.

(d) Children under 25 years includes dependent children whose relationship in the household is a natural or adopted child, step child, foster child, grandchild or otherwise related child aged under 15 years and unrelated children aged under 15 years; and children aged 15-24 years who may be dependent students in full-time education or non-dependent children who are not in full-time education.

(e) Non-dependent children aged 25 years and over.

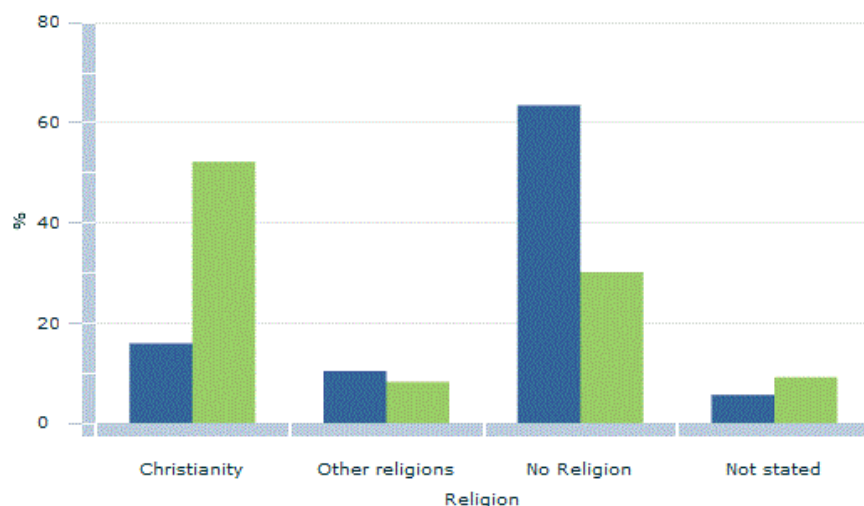
Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

RELIGION

People who identified as sex and/or gender diverse were twice as likely as the rest of the Australian population to not have a religious affiliation (63% compared with 30%), and less likely to report an affiliation to Christianity (16% compared with 52%).

The sex and/or gender diverse group were more likely than the rest of the Australian population to not have a religious affiliation across all age groups. The difference was most noticeable for young adults (aged 18 to 34 years), where almost three-quarters of sex and/or gender diverse people (74%) reported not having a religious affiliation compared with 39% of the rest of the population in this age group.

Religious affiliation(a), 2016



■ Sex and/or gender diverse(b)

■ Rest of Australian population

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Footnote(s): (a) As religion was an optional question, the 'not stated' category was included when calculating proportions. (b) People who gave a valid and intentional response of sex or gender other than male or female.

Source(s): ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

The sex and/or gender diverse group were slightly more likely than the rest of the Australian population to identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (3.7% compared with 3.0%). Further information on how this proportion was calculated is included in the Explanatory Information section at the end of this article.

People in the sex and/or gender diverse group were less likely than the remainder of the population to have reported they were born overseas (19% compared with 28%). The most commonly reported countries of birth for people born

overseas, for both the sex and/or gender diverse group and the remainder of the population, were England (26% and 15% respectively) and New Zealand (13% and 8.4% respectively). People who identified as sex and/or gender diverse were also less likely to speak a language other than English at home (14% compared to 22%).

PERSONAL INCOME

As reported in the 2016 Census, the median personal income for people aged 15 years and over who identified as sex and/or gender diverse was \$467 per week, compared with males (\$835) and females (\$536) aged 15 years and over. This could be partially attributed to the younger age profile of the sex and/or gender diverse group. Further information on who is included in the 'males' and 'females' groups can be found in the Explanatory Information section at the end of this article.

LABOUR FORCE

In the 2016 Census, almost two-thirds of people aged 15 years and over who identified as sex and/or gender diverse (65%) were in the labour force, compared with 70% of males and 60% of females aged 15 years and over. Over half (55%) of the sex and/or gender diverse group aged 15 years and over were employed, less than males (65%) but a similar proportion to females (56%).

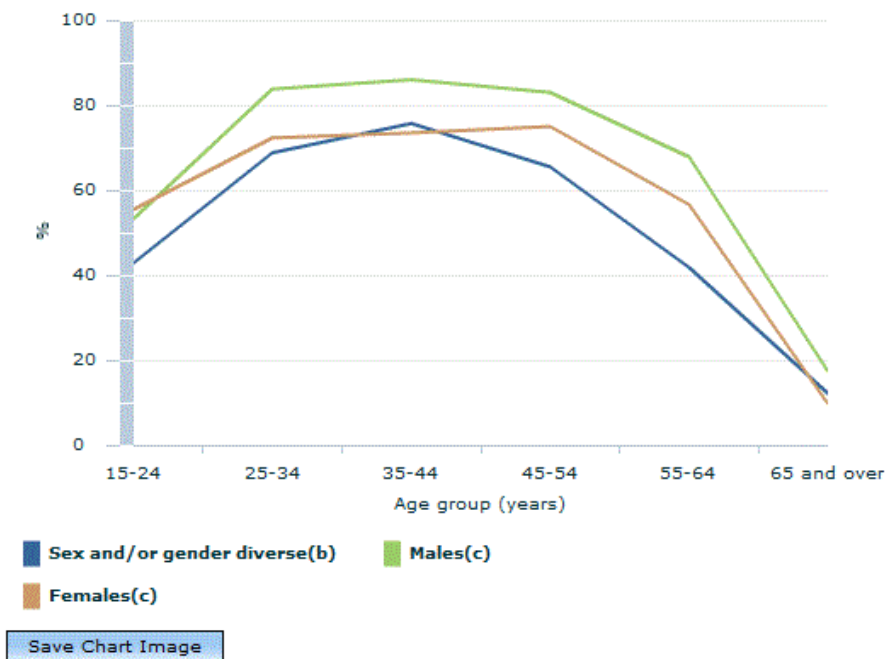


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Footnote(s): (a) The 'not stated' category was excluded when calculating proportions. (b) People who gave a valid and intentional response of sex or gender other than male or female. (c) Further information on who is included in the 'males' and 'females' groups can be found in the Explanatory Information section at the end of this article.

Source(s): ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Proportion of employed people(a) aged 15 years & over, 2016



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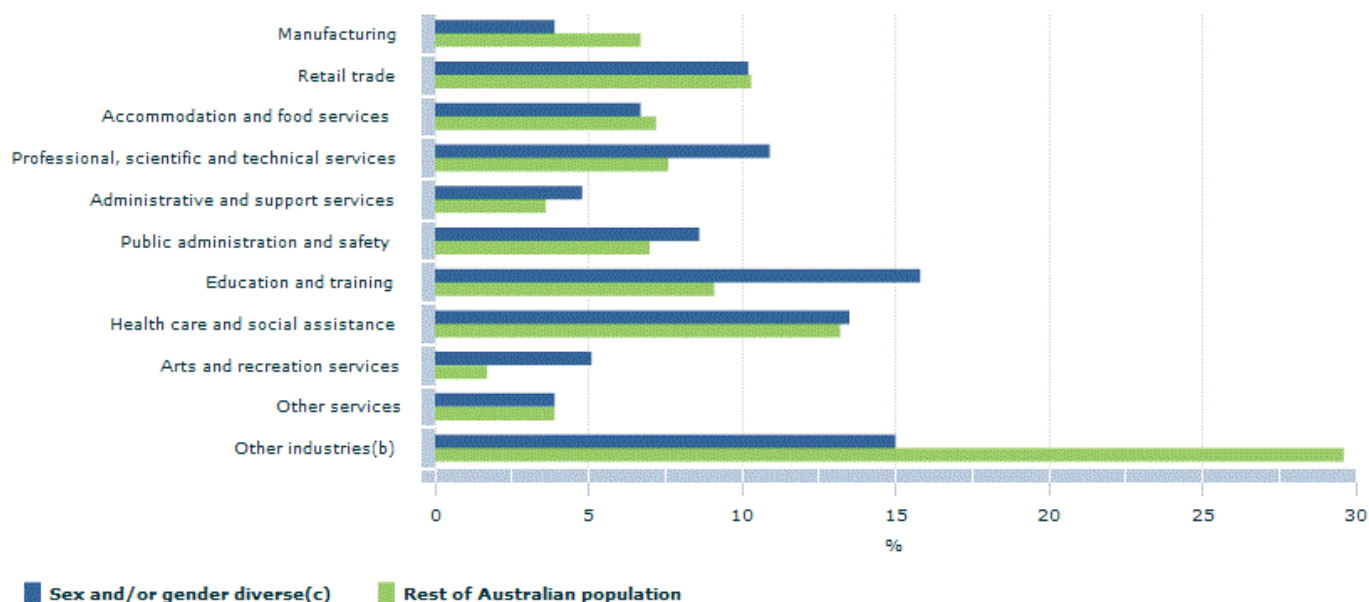
Footnote(s): (a) The 'not stated' category was excluded when calculating proportions. (b) People who gave a valid and intentional response of sex or gender other than male or female. (c) Further information on who is included in the 'males' and 'females' groups can be found in the Explanatory Information section at the end of this article.

Source(s): ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Industry of Employment

Education and training (16%) was the most common industry of employment for sex and/or gender diverse people aged 15 years and over. This was followed by Health care and social assistance (14%), Professional, scientific and technical services (11%), Retail trade (10%), and Public administration and safety (8.6%). Health care and social assistance (13%) and Retail trade (10%) were the most commonly reported industries of employment for Australians who did not identify as sex and/or gender diverse.

Proportion of employed people by industry of employment(a), 2016



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Footnote(s): (a) The 'not stated' and 'inadequately described' categories were excluded from the total when calculating proportions. (b) Includes industries with less than 20 sex and/or gender diverse people each. (c) People who gave a valid and intentional response of sex or gender other than male or female.

Source(s): ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Occupation

A third of employed people, aged 15 years and over, in the sex and/or gender diverse group were Professionals (35%), which was also the most common profession for the rest of the Australian population (23%). The next most common occupations for the sex and/or gender diverse group were Community and personal service workers (14%), Clerical and administrative workers (13%), Managers (11%), and Sales workers (8.9%).

Proportion of employed people by occupation(a), 2016



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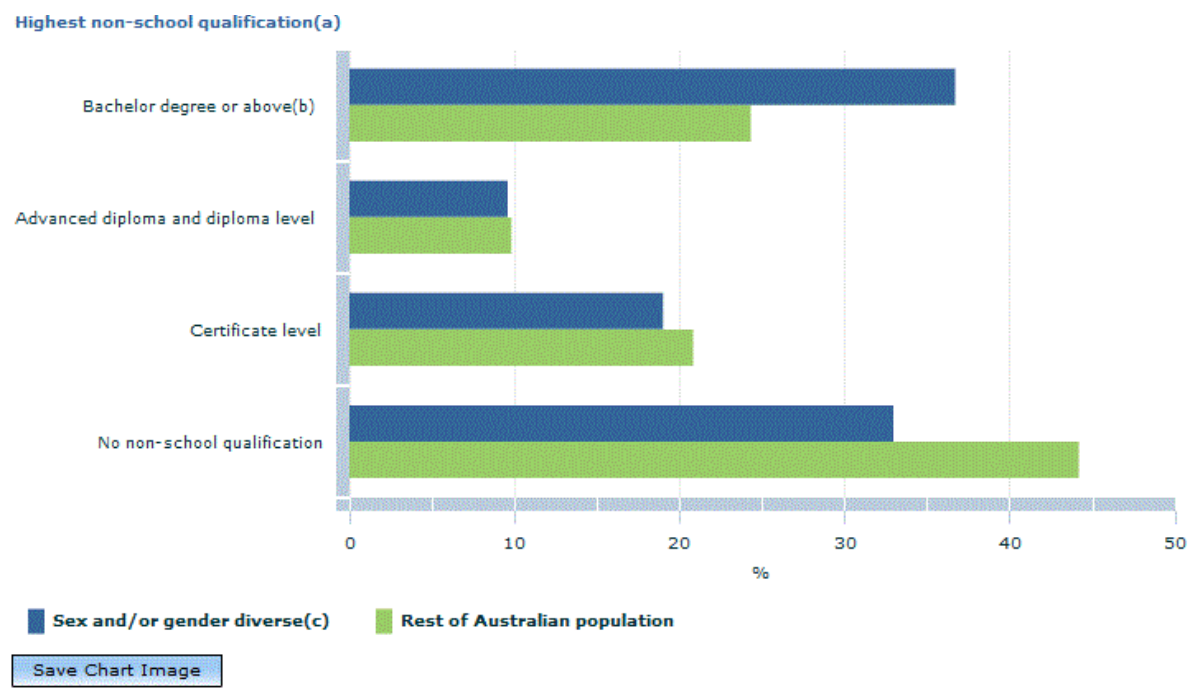
Footnote(s): (a) The 'not stated' and 'inadequately described' categories were excluded from the total when calculating proportions. (b) Includes occupations with less than 20 sex and/or gender diverse people each. (c) People who gave a valid and intentional response of sex or gender other than male or female.

Source(s): ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

EDUCATION

Almost three-quarters (72%) of the sex and/or gender diverse group had completed Year 12, and two-thirds (65%) had a non-school qualification. These proportions were higher than the rest of the Australian population (57% and 55% respectively). Higher levels of education may be partly due to the younger age profile of the sex and/or gender diverse group, and generally higher educational achievements of younger people.

People who identified as sex and/or gender diverse were also more likely than the rest of the population to have completed a Bachelor degree or above (37% and 24% respectively).



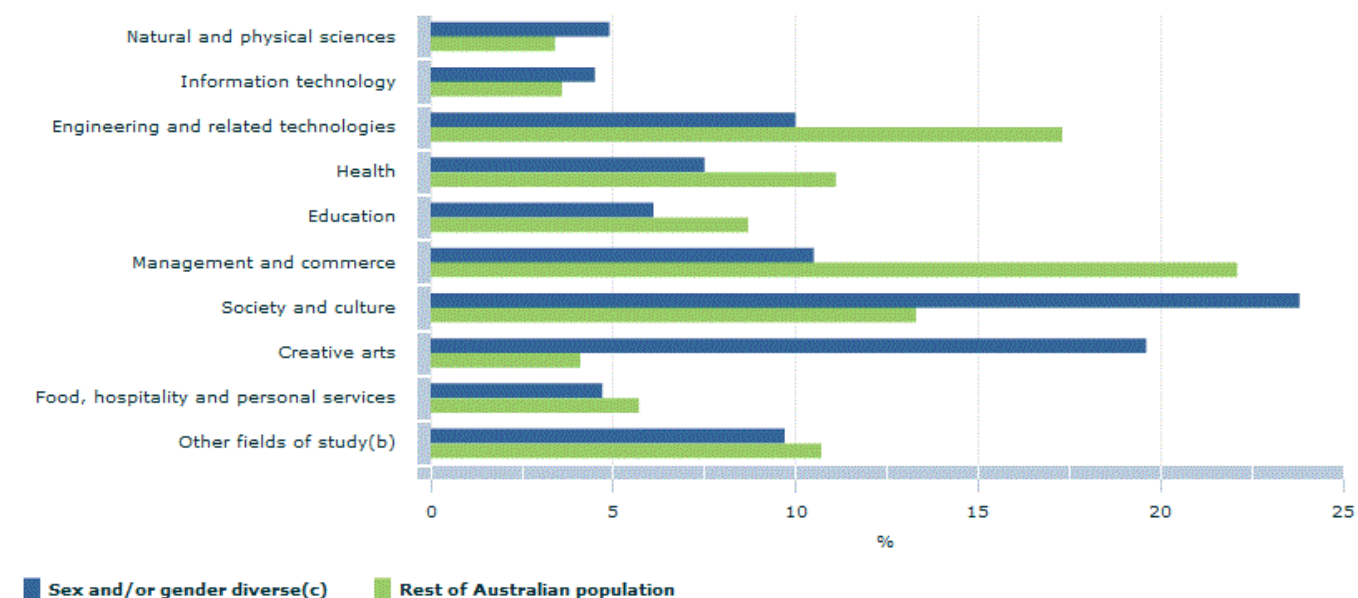
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Footnote(s): (a) The 'not stated' category was excluded and the 'inadequately described' category was included in the total when calculating proportions. (b) Includes bachelor degree, graduate certificate and graduate diploma, and postgraduate degrees. (c) People who gave a valid and intentional response of sex or gender other than male or female.

Source(s): ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

The most common fields of education for the sex and/or gender diverse group were Society and culture (24%), Creative arts (20%), Management and commerce (11%), and Engineering and related technologies (10%).

Field of education for highest non-school qualification(a), 2016



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Footnote(s): (a) The 'not stated' category was excluded and the 'inadequately described' category was included in the total when calculating proportions. (b) Includes Inadequately described and Fields of study with less than 20 sex and/or gender diverse people each. (c) People who gave a valid and intentional response of sex or gender other than male or female.

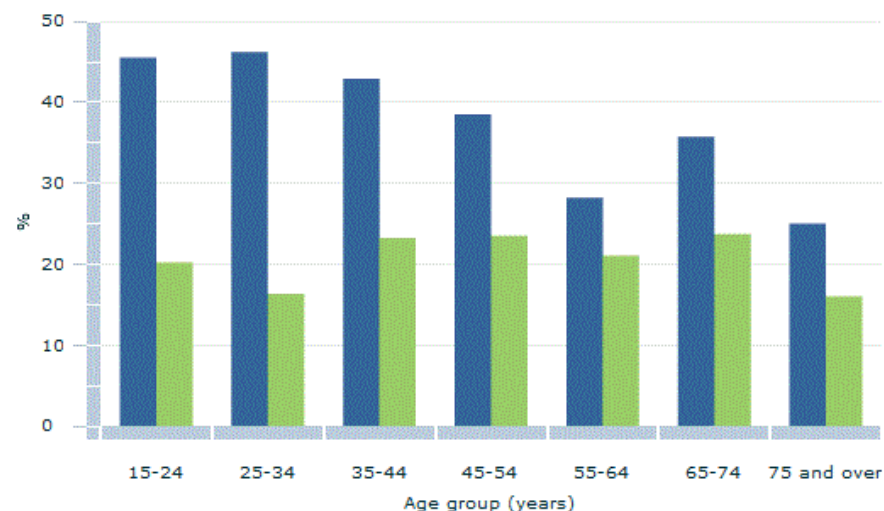
Source(s): ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

DISABILITY AND UNPAID WORK

Voluntary work for an organisation or group

People who identified as sex and/or gender diverse were twice as likely as the rest of the Australian population to have done voluntary work in the twelve months prior to the Census (42% compared with 21%). Close to half of younger sex and/or gender diverse people (aged 15 to 34 years) had volunteered in this time (46%).

Voluntary work for an organisation or group(a), 2016



■ Sex and/or gender diverse(b)

■ Rest of Australian population

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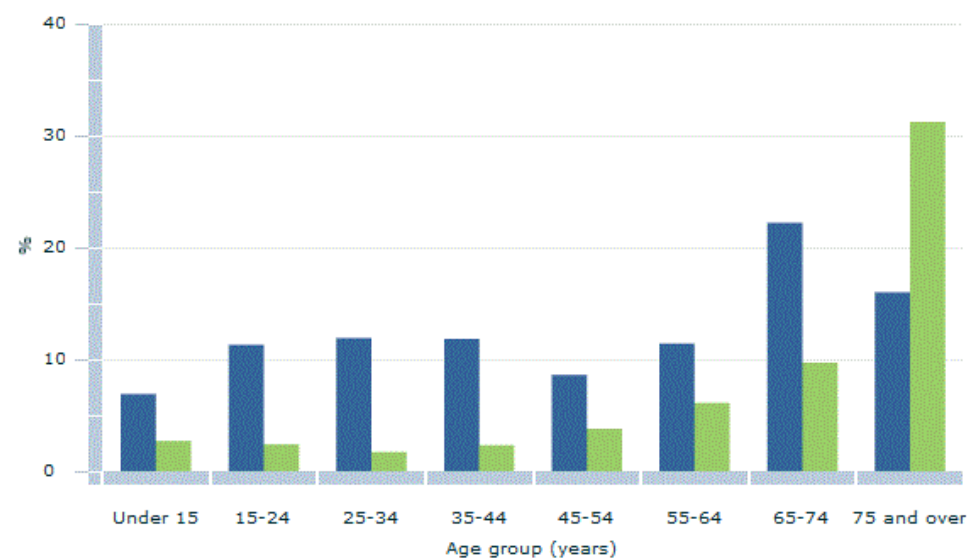
Footnote(s): (a) The 'not stated' category was excluded when calculating proportions. (b) People who gave a valid and intentional response of sex or gender other than male or female.

Source(s): ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Need for Assistance with Core Activities

Sex and/or gender diverse people were twice as likely as the rest of the Australian population to have a need for assistance with core activities (12% compared with 5.5%). This difference was most noticeable for people aged under 45 years.

Need for Assistance with Core activities(a), 2016



■ Sex and/or gender diverse(b)

■ Rest of Australian population

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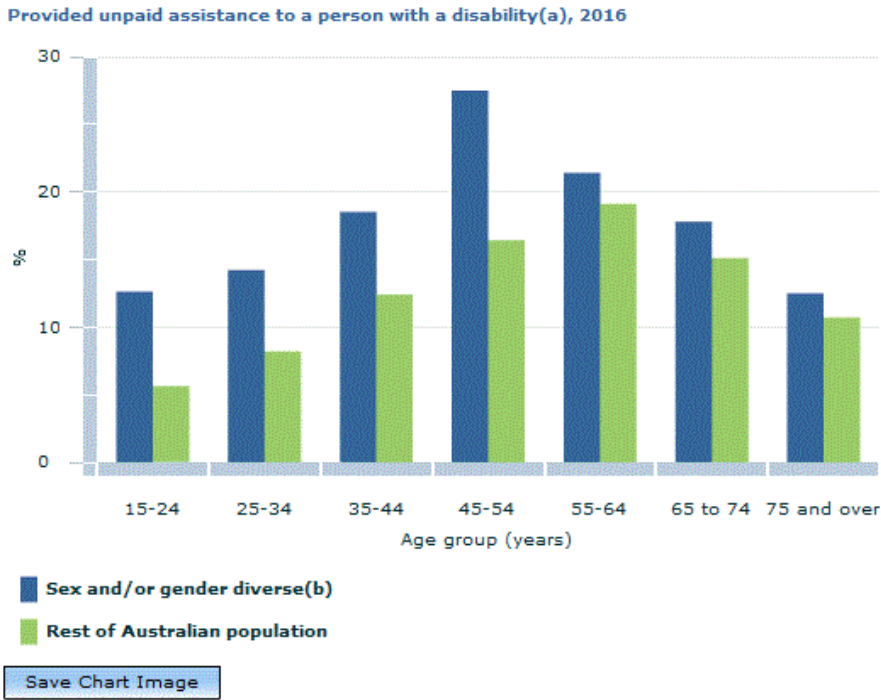
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Footnote(s): (a) The 'not stated' category was excluded when calculating proportions. (b) People who gave a valid and intentional response of sex or gender other than male or female.

Source(s): ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability

People in the sex and/or gender diverse group were more likely than the rest of the Australian population to have provided assistance to a person with a disability (16% compared with 12%).



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Footnote(s): (a) The 'not stated' category was excluded when calculating proportions. (b) People who gave a valid and intentional response of sex or gender other than male or female.

Source(s): ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

NEXT STEPS

Information on the sex and/or gender diverse population is not available in standard output products due to the small numbers involved, and the descriptors for persons who reported as sex and/or gender diverse will not be used by the ABS as an official classification.

This information is only available in the ABS series of analytical articles on the sex and/or gender diverse population.

This article is the second article. Sex and gender diversity in the 2016 Census has already been published in Reflecting Australia - Stories from the Census, 2016 (cat. no. 2071.0.).

The approach followed in the 2016 Census was an important step for better collection of information on sex/gender diversity. The approach taken in the 2021 Census will be informed by learnings from the 2016 Census, international Census developments and approaches, further testing and engagement with a broad range of stakeholders.

EXPLANATORY INFORMATION

This article presents information on people who gave a valid and intentional sex and/or gender diverse response to the 2016 Census Sex question.

Further information on how sex and/or gender diverse people were counted in the 2016 Census can be found in Sex and gender diversity in the 2016 Census.

For all sections, except Religious Affiliation, the 'not stated' category was excluded from totals when calculating proportions. This may lead to proportions differing slightly from other published data. For example, the proportion of people who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander is slightly lower when the 'not stated' category is included in the total. As religion was an optional Census question, 'not stated' responses were included in the total when calculating proportions.

For definitions of the terms used above, see the Census of Population and Housing: Census Dictionary, 2016 (cat. no. 2901.0). Selected items are also included in the Glossary, from the Explanatory Notes tab at the top of this page. For more information about 2016 Census data release and products, go to www.abs.gov.au/census.

Please note that there are small random adjustments made to all cell values to protect the confidentiality of data. These adjustments may cause the sum of components to differ from the total.

Categories used for comparison in this article

The 'sex and/or gender diverse' group includes people who gave a valid and intentional sex and/or gender diverse response (see Sex and gender diversity in the 2016 Census for more detail).

The 'rest of the Australian population', 'males' and 'females' groups include people who identified as male or female and those who didn't provide a valid response (of male, female or sex and/or gender diverse) to the Sex question. Sex is imputed as male or female for people who didn't provide a valid response for the Sex question. For more information on Imputation see Derivations and imputations.

How were valid sex and/or gender diverse people placed into the male and female categories in other ABS products?

The inclusion of counts of the number of people that have reported as other than male or female in standard Census products could create confidentiality issues due to the relatively small numbers and the availability of these products for small geographic areas. In line with the ABS Standard for Sex and Gender Variables, 2016, each statistical record was randomly allocated to male or female for inclusion in standard Census products. The ABS has separately retained the actual response in order to support the production of analytical articles on the sex and/or gender diverse population.

What are the definitions for the different categories of sex/gender diversity?

The definitions of sex/gender diversity are as follows:

- **Male** - A person whose biological sex and gender identity are both male.
- **Female** - A person whose biological sex and gender identity are both female.
- **Intersex/Indeterminate** - Intersex people are those who are born with genetic, hormonal or physical characteristics that are not typically 'male' or 'female'. Intersex people have a diversity of bodies and identities. A person of indeterminate sex or gender is either someone whose biological sex cannot be unambiguously determined or someone who identifies as neither male nor female.
- **Trans male** - A transgender person who was born female but whose gender identity is male. Also may include people assigned female at birth who are transitioning from female to male sex.
- **Trans female** - A transgender person who was born male but whose gender identity is female. Also may include people assigned male at birth who are transitioning from male to female.
- **Transgender not elsewhere classified (nec)** - A person whose gender identity is different from their sex at birth and has not indicated that they are trans male or trans female.
- **Non-binary** - A person who identifies as non-binary.
- **Another gender** - A person who has multiple genders, is gender neutral, is gender fluid or has another identity not covered by the rest of the categories. This a separate category to Non-binary in this descriptor set because this set groups similar terms together, using the term provided by respondents.
- **Other not further defined (nfd)** - A person who does not identify as male or female, without any further qualifying information about their gender or sex identity.